

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2005

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, October 3, 2005 at 5:45 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Woodrow, Ballew, Lundberg, and Fitch. Also present were City Manager Mike Kelly, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

Councilors Ralston and Pishioneri were absent (excused).

1. Proposed Amendments to Article 40 of the Springfield Development Code – Mixed-Use Zoning Districts.

City Planner Mark Metzger presented the staff report on this item. In 2003, council directed staff to review Article 40 of the Springfield Development Code with the purpose of recommending changes that would increase the viability of mixed use development where it is implemented. Mixed-use development is central to implementing the policy of “nodal development” adopted in TransPlan. The proposed changes to Article 40 are a response to the council directive.

TransPlan proposes a strategy for reducing auto dependence through the use of a series of measures that includes the creation of focused areas of higher density mixed-use development along transit corridors called nodes. In adopting TransPlan, the city committed itself to formally identifying nodal development areas and to adopting the policies needed to implement them.

In the wake of Eugene’s experience with implementing nodes in the Spring of 2003, the Springfield Council directed staff to review Article 40 of the Development Code to determine if they contained policies that might inadvertently be a stumbling block to desired development in nodes.

The proposed changes to Article 40 are the result of comments and recommendations of a panel of architects and developers convened in October 2003 to evaluate Springfield’s policies for implementing nodal development. This group met three times and contributed to the proposed amendments in this packet. In addition, Springfield staff reviewed recommendations made by ECONorthwest, a consulting firm charged with making recommendations to the city about how to successfully implement nodal development. The recommendations of the panel, ECONorthwest, and staff, form the basis of the changes in Article 40 that are submitted for council consideration.

More recently, staff met with representatives from Pacific Cascade Federal Credit Union and Walgreen Drug, to review the impact of Article 40 on their projects as they were in their design phase. Article 40 standards posed no impediment to their designs in the Mohawk area. In the past week, staff met with Steve Korth of McKay Investments, owners of the Mohawk Shopping

Center to review the proposed changes. Mr. Korth was pleased with the proposed changes and found them useful.

Most of the proposed changes are relatively minor, but in total they will have an important impact to the viability of potential development. One significant change is a proposal to create a "discretionary track" for site plan review of projects in mixed-use zoning districts governed by Article 40. The proposed track will allow a developer whose site design does not meet certain development standards to demonstrate to staff (with appeal rights to the Planning Commission) that his/her design meets or exceeds the intent of those standards and win approval of the project. The proposed discretionary track is elective and does not replace the existing review process. This approach offers more flexibility for staff to work with developers to find solutions to difficult design issues where implementing mixed-use development.

Discussion was held regarding the Mohawk area and the opportunities that had recently occurred for redevelopment in that area.

Mr. Metzger reviewed some of the changes as outlined in Attachment 1. Many of the changes had come from recommendations by ECONorthwest, the development panel and review by staff. He discussed what some of the changes would mean. He explained why some of the changes were being proposed. He discussed the difference between development in the Downtown area and in the Mohawk area. He discussed the purpose of nodal districts and how they affected traffic and allowed other uses such as walking, bus transportation or bike riding.

Mayor Leiken asked if Mr. Metzger had traffic counts on Mohawk compared with Coburg. Mr. Metzger said he did have them, but not with him. Mayor Leiken clarified the uses that were allowed in nodal zones. He discussed some of the businesses and offices that were being developed in the Mohawk area. He asked if there was a buyer for the old Kmart building.

Development Services Director Bill Grile said he was not aware of a potential buyer for the old Kmart building.

Mr. Metzger said if there was a national retailer located at the Mohawk site, the traffic could increase. He said the Mohawk area was on the edge of making changes.

Councilor Lundberg said people in Springfield would shop in Springfield if there were choices here. She said there was a lot of potential.

Mr. Metzger continued to review some of the amendments proposed as listed on Attachment 1. He referred to the new Justice Center which would be built in the downtown area in the next few years. He said one of the most important changes was to create a discretionary review tract for mixed-use projects to allow staff more flexibility to work with developers to resolve conflicts when a design achieves the intent of the Development Code but fails in one or more details.

Councilor Fitch thanked staff for this last amendment. She said it allowed for those that wanted to be innovative in a different way. She discussed the new LTD Station.

Mr. Metzger clarified that the discretionary tract was applicable to a portion of the mixed-use code, but did not get into public works engineering standards. Where flexibility was needed was

in site design and this gave the city such a tool. There was a variance process as there had always been. He said the current code did not allow mixed-use in certain areas, but this would allow more flexibility to put a mixed-use area near a transit.

Councilor Ballew referred to Attachment 1, part 2(b) shown on pages 3 and 4. She asked if the maximum requirement would allow enough room for the St. Vincent DePaul's building.

Mr. Metzger said it would allow enough room. Staff met with St. Vincent DePaul, Walgreen's, and Pacific Cascade.

2. Proposed Plan Diagram Amendments and Rezoning of the Mohawk and Downtown Commercial Centers to Nodal Mixed Use Development.

City Planner Mark Metzger and Planning Manager Greg Mott presented the staff report on this item. These proposals are consistent with the council's commitment to the state to redesignate 400 acres to mixed use-nodal development at various sites throughout the city. The action in Mohawk requires a plan diagram amendment and rezoning; the action Downtown requires a plan diagram amendment, rezoning, and refinement plan text amendments. The amendments to the refinement plan were prepared during the Springfield Station Area Plan efforts.

These two actions follow on the heels of the redesignation of the Glenwood river front to mixed use-nodal development. Together, Mohawk, Downtown and Glenwood total 230 acres specifically committed to "nodal" development. As you may recall, the City and the state (LCDC) agreed to alternative performance measures for Transportation Planning Rule compliance when TransPlan was updated in 2001. Pedestrian friendly, transit-oriented development design ("nodal") is the land use measure our metro-area agreed to implement as a substitute for the required five percent reduction in vehicle miles traveled by automobiles during the planning period (to 2020). The most significant effect of this action will be enabling more residential development, both within buildings occupied by commercial uses and as a stand-alone use. The City's Development Code already requires pedestrian - friendly commercial and multi-family development; "nodal" precludes 11 specific auto-oriented businesses. The two proposals include language to establish "vesting" for any of these prohibited businesses, but not allow new development.

The Planning Commission is scheduled to conduct public hearings on these actions on October 4, 2005. The Council's public hearings are scheduled for October 17, 2005 or November 7, 2005 depending upon the record closure date of the Planning Commission hearing.

Mr. Metzger referred to a map showing the proposed node area in Mohawk. He said it encompassed the area in Mohawk that was currently zoned for major retail center. That would all be redesignated to mixed-use commercial. There were residential uses around the edges which staff was proposing be changed to mixed-use residential. That would allow people to continue what they were doing. He said there were some areas of major retail center west of Mohawk, shown by the shaded areas on map. He said the boundaries around the mixed-use of the major retail center were being cleaned up to make the node more compatible. Staff had talked to several of the larger property owners in the area. Two of the property owners were at the table when the original mixed-use code was crafted.

Councilor Ballew asked how the hospital was zoned.

Mr. Metzger said hospitals were allowed uses. He said the overlay would continue as usual.

Councilor Woodrow asked about other property owned by the hospital to the east.

Mr. Metzger said the property owned by the hospital was in the hospital overlay zone. It would allow them to develop hospital related uses. He said the zoning east of the property was low density residential. The overlay zone allowed the hospital to expand if they chose.

Mr. Mott discussed the downtown area. He said the area was still tethered to the city's agreement with the state with respect to the Transportation Planning Rule, Nodal Development and TransPlan's Alternative Performance Measures. The action was intended to comply with that agreement to designate a certain number of sites for nodal development.

Councilor Fitch asked if she needed to announce a conflict of interest because it could include property that she had ownership in. She removed herself from this portion of the discussion due to a possible conflict of interest.

Mr. Mott said the downtown had a Refinement Plan since 1986. There had been no effort to update that Refinement Plan. He said it embodied about ninety-five percent of what they wanted to achieve with redevelopment mixed-use and nodal, although the project list was out of date. In 2001, a grant was received to build the Springfield Station Specific Area Plan. At that time, a committee was formed to look at ways to utilize that station. The proposal included designation for nodal development and changes to update the Refinement Plan. He noted the distinction downtown had over both Mohawk and Glenwood was the infrastructure base which was already in place. Downtown had allowed development of every square inch of property and did not require off street parking. The Downtown lent itself to nodal development. An exception would be a list of uses that would not be allowed in Downtown. Those would include auto related businesses and would cause a change in circumstance for four businesses. He listed those four businesses. He referred to the map and noted that 8th Street east would no longer be included in the downtown mixed-use area. He explained why. Discussion was held regarding the Washburne District. The downtown mixed-use area did not overlap the Washburne District.

Councilor Ballew asked if it would affect business owners east of 8th Street if the mixed-use area ended at 8th Street.

Mr. Mott said it would not change the designation east of 8th Street.

Councilor Ballew asked about the changes.

Mr. Mott said east of 8th street, zoning would remain community commercial or low density residential. People to the west of 8th Street would have a different set of development standards, including parking and setback standards. He said mixed-use residential and commercial zonings implemented the mixed-use nodal designation. He explained. He said publicly owned land could be zoned public land and open space.

Councilor Ballew asked if the Memorial Building was currently designated as publicly owned.

Mr. Metzger said it was and he pointed it out on the map. It would remain the same.

Mr. Mott explained what would happen if Willamalane were to sell to a private developer.

Councilor Ballew noted that the high density residential came very close to the Washburne Historic District. She said she was concerned about buffering.

Mr. Mott said there would be requirements under the development standards that any redevelopment or new development within the mixed-use area would have to take into consideration the question of compatibility. That was included in the Refinement Plan text.

Councilor Woodrow asked about Robert Scherer of Springfield Buick's request.

Mr. Mott said they received correspondence from Mr. Scherer explaining why he was in opposition to the overlay district on his property. Staff responded that he was accurate as far as his opinion, and staff would read into the record during the public hearing that his correspondence was received and that Mr. Scherer felt his property should be excluded from the overlay district. Mr. Mott said it was up to the City Council whether or not his property would be excluded. Mr. Mott explained the process for public hearing for zone changes and other changes. The public hearing was advertised, describing the physical change. The Planning Commission or the City Council could reduce the area proposed and still be consistent with what was being advertised. Part of the discussion and decision could be to change the boundaries.

Councilor Ballew asked if they had received responses from other owners in the area.

Mr. Mott said they had received about twelve phone calls from property owners. He had been in contact with Willamalane and other private businesses. A lot of notices had gone out. He said it was impossible to undertake something like this without any friction. The city could do what it could to relieve some of the friction, but the city may not be in total control to adjust how it wanted because of the agreement with the state.

Councilor Ballew asked what would happen once this was in place.

Mr. Mott said the city had promoted improvements to the infrastructure and would continue. He discussed pedestrian level lighting and pedestrian facilities. He discussed the designation of Main Street and there could be things the city could do regarding access and speed. Unless council decided differently from a budget standpoint, redevelopment would be a private enterprise.

Councilor Ballew said she hoped we were taking advantage of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) planning.

Mr. Mott said there were certain activities that were well suited for CDBG.

Mayor Leiken said the city needed to keep an open mind. He said when TransPlan was adopted, the explosive growth in Junction City, Creswell and other surrounding communities was not expected. He said people were moving out into those areas and driving into our cities. The pressure to maintain roads and expand the industrial land base would be on Eugene and

Springfield. The city needed to adapt to the environment around us, as it was continually changing. He said he liked the idea of the planned developments and the redevelopment of Glenwood. He said it was up to Springfield to lead and show what positive planning could do. He referred to Gateway and the compromises that were made to help development grow in that area. He appreciated the work that was being done and the response from the city to concerned business owners.

Councilor Lundberg referred to the CDBG planning. She said last year there were not enough proposals to use all the funds downtown. She would like the city to spur some ideas to developers for projects for downtown.

Mr. Mott said downtown was designated as a blighted area and was eligible for CDBG funds.

Councilor Fitch rejoined the work session (6:44pm).

3. Springfield Justice Center – Recommended Architect.

Project Manager Carole Knapel presented the staff report on this item. The city received seven proposals in response to the Request for Proposals for the Springfield Justice Center. The selection committee, comprised of two City Councilors (non-voting members), one Planning Commissioner, two Police Department representatives, one City Prosecutor representative, one Courts representative, two representatives from the Citizens Advisory Committee (who are already appointed to the CAC because of their involvement on the Police Planning Task Force), the Assistant City Manager, the Project Manager, the Assistant Project Manager, and the City's Justice Programming Consultant reviewed the proposals on September 14, and decided to interview five firms.

The selection committee conducted interviews with the five architectural firms on September 27. There was consensus from the group as to the top-ranked firms. Staff is conducting reference checks and will provide council with a recommendation at the October 3 meeting.

Ms. Knapel reviewed the process for choosing the architect for this project. She described the members of the selection committee. There was consensus of the group to recommend Robinson and Sherwood as the architects to design the project. Robinson and Sherwood had partnered with Rosser, another firm. Rosser would be working with them, doing much of the work on the criminal justice portions of the project; however, Robinson and Sherwood would be the lead architect for the project. She said after the selection committee met, background checks were done on both Robinson and Sherwood and Rosser. They both received high recommendations. She said the committee was looking for a firm that would listen to the client. During the background checks, they also asked about the firm's ability to design within the project budget that was established and to design and deliver the project within the established time line. Robinson and Sherwood scored the highest points possible in those areas.

Councilor Woodrow said it was interesting sitting through the interviews. All five applicants would have done a great job, but Roberts and Sherwood "wowed" the committee with their presentation.

Councilor Ballew said the Agenda Item Summary (AIS) did not provide her with much information. She suggested a chart with comparables for all applicants and said she would like to see something like that in the future.

Ms. Knapel said they would do that in the future. She noted that because the interviews were just conducted last Tuesday, it was difficult to get all the information into the packet.

Councilor Lundberg said she agreed that more information would have been helpful. She noted that she had worked with this firm quite often and they had a great ability to make it work for what the city wanted.

Mr. Kelly said during the public hearing, staff would be asking for approval. Staff could review the proposal and provide the additional information during that time. Staff would also be back with other components before council would award the contract.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa

Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:

Amy Sowa
City Recorder